MORE ERRORS!

Roy Gault

This month the Bulletin is full of 'errors', but as Kenny Everett would say, 'it's all in the best possible taste'! At the moment Sloper Wartime Provisionals are in the ascendancy, so it's fitting that I start with this category. As far as I'm aware, there are just three such 'errors'.

Sloper Wartime Provisional Errors.

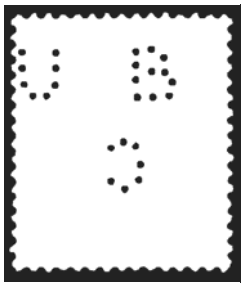
The first to be discovered was "UB/C" with a reversed "C" on a 3d issue 'Q'. This was reported by ***Stephen Steere*** and was featured on the cover of B355 (August 2008), along with a detailed description on page 19.

Close examination reveals that all three letters were struck from the front of the stamp, but in the final stage of the process either:

- the sheets of stamps were fed through inverted, or more likely
- the die forming the "C" was inserted into the perforating machine inverted.

In either case the net result is that the "C" appears reversed. At the time I simply made a note in my master copy of Section 'U' of the Details catalogue, but in truth it warrants its own catalogue number, and has now been allocated U0230.05p.

c1941



U0230.05p

As can be seen, the 'error' stamp was used in combination with a 1/- issue 'Q' with another Wartime Provisional "UB" (U0210.02ap). The cover is postmarked London, 5th November 1941.

The second sighting of a Sloper Wartime Provisional 'error' was by ***Michael Millar*** in April 2010 when he reported an Irish Perfin with "GS/R", but with the "R" inverted. This error would have been produced in much the same way as the preceding example. The stamp is an Eire ½p 'Sword of Light', postmarked Baile A't(ha Cliath) [Dublin] and dated 12 XII 41 (for 12th December 1941).

c1941 **c1945**

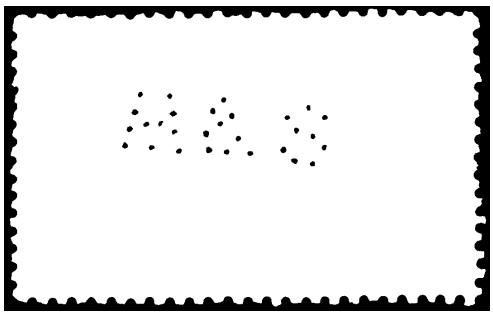
G190.01a **W2630.01bp**

The third and latest sighting, reported by ***Steve Netten*** in January 2014, is rather more complicated. Although undated, it appears on a 1d issue 'R' dating from sometime after August 1941, and has a partial Lon(don) postmark. I believe the intended lettering was "WF/D". Wartime Provisionals with this lettering (W2630.01ap) were used by Willis, Faber & Dumas Ltd, Insurance Brokers, London EC3, from 1941 through to at least the middle of 1948. A 'regular' die was in use by the early 1950's. There is no record of a Wartime Provisional lettered "FW/D".

In this case, both the "W" and the "F" were struck from the back of the stamp (i.e. gummed side upwards), and the "D" struck from the front of the stamp. Here I suspect the "W" die was inserted correctly into the perforating machine and the stack of sheets (probably 3 or 4 at a time) fed into the perforating machine with at least one sheet being gummed side uppermost, presumably unnoticed as the top sheet was face upwards. Then the "F" die was inserted correctly into the machine and the same stack of sheets perforated as before.

It would appear that the error was noticed prior to the final operation of perforating the stack of sheets (now all face upwards) with the "D" die inserted correctly into the perforating machine. Far-fetched, maybe, but I can think of no other way this unusual set of lettering could have come about!

This next item isn't a Sloper Wartime Provisional, but an 'SPG' type, created we believe by clamping individual letters together prior to perforating the sheets of stamps. Here, human error has resulted in one of the letters being used inverted. The stamp in question is a KGV 2/6d Seahorse (Type 'A'), dated 9th September 1919.



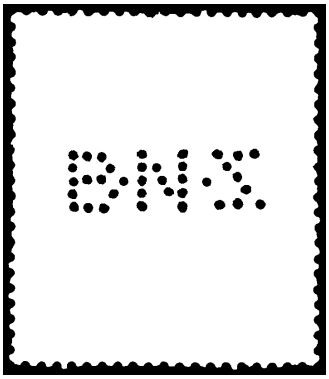
W6680.07av

I've allocated the catalogue number the suffix 'v' to cater for the remote possibility of another example being found in which the position of the component letters varies.

Die Errors.

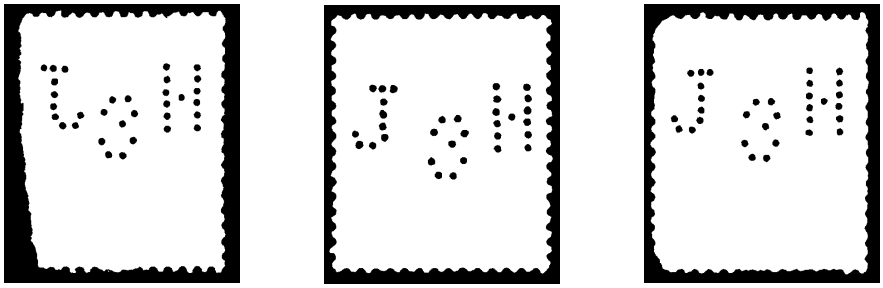
This category also relies on human error, but in this case the error is 'hard-wired' into the perforating head i.e. the die-maker has simply made the die with a letter that's reversed. It's a bit like writing 'Play up Sky Blues' on a steamed-up window that's intended to be viewed from the other side. Again, I only know of three examples.

The first of these was reported by the late **Dr Reg Powell** in B213 (October 1984). His 'lovely Exhibition item' shows a "B·N·Z" Perfin (probably used by the Bank of New Zealand) with the "Z" reversed (B5240.01). His copy was on a Queen Victoria 10/- (SG183) postmarked London, with a probable 1890 date. The die was quickly modified to produce a proper "BNZ" (B5220.01), known used 4th October 1890.



B5240.01

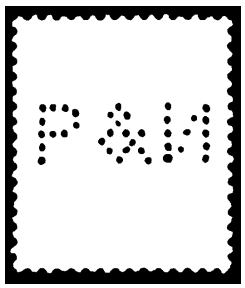
c1914 **1914-1916** **c1916**



J7080.01 **J7080.02** **J7080.02a**

Two more ‘reversed letter’ dies were reported in B269 (April 1994). The first is the ‘Michelius’ die “JSH” (or is it “J3H”), allocated J7081.01, in which the “J” is clearly reversed. It is known in this condition postmarked London, 28th March 1914. It was hastily repaired (J7080.02 - known used 12th June 1914/13th March 1916), before being replaced completely by J7080.02a c1916.

c1890



P3340.04

The final example is “P&N” (P3340.04) with a reversed “N”, known only from a single example on a 16-dot QV 1d Lilac, fiscally used.

Printing Errors (first published in B339, December 2005)

The earliest ‘error’ I can find a reference to with a perfin is the ‘**OP-PC**’ error on the Queen Victoria Line Engraved 1½d value initialled with “GLYN” (G3260.01). The illustration alongside is of **Maurice Harp’s** copy, and may well be the one listed by Charles Jennings on page 64 of his ‘The History of British Security Stamps’ (1968).

Printing errors can manifest themselves in many ways, but typically by colour flaws and folded sheets. The Queen Victoria 1d Venetian Red perforated with "J^{no}S" (J5790.01) clearly shows a ***colour flaw*** streaking down the stamp. The second item, noted by **Mike Bavin** in an auction, is far more striking! This time we see "BL/F" (B4350.02), albeit with a few pins missing, on a spectacular ***paper fold*** pair.

Alongside we have an ***imperforate*** pair of 3p Ultramarine (2-band) Machins with "BC" (B1110.03M). The item probably dates to c1972.

And finally, looking out for ***inverted watermarks*** might prove fruitful.

c1872

B2785.01

Maurice Harp reported a Queen Victoria 2½d Rosy Mauve (pl. 17) with an inverted watermark in B386 (October 2013, page 5), and has kindly provided these images of **Larry Rausch's** Queen Victoria 1d Red plate 154 with "B.F.J.C" (B2785.01).